

Safety Tips from Caltrans

- Follow terms of the encroachment permit.
- Follow the terms of your letter of consent provided by the Caltrans maintenance manager.
- Must have traffic control: cones and signage.
- Try to work facing traffic.
- Do not work on SR-27 between Cala Cuesta Rd. to Pacific Coast Highway (SR-1).
- Ask for Caltrans assistance in reducing fire dangers by calling the West Region Maintenance Office at 805-389-1565.

FAQs on permits and letters of consent

- When is an Encroachment Permit required?**
An encroachment permit must be obtained when community groups, businesses, or contractors need to access a portion of the highway to clear and/or plant vegetation. The permit process can take a minimum of two weeks to approve. To apply for an encroachment permit contact the District 7 Permits Office at 213-897-3631 or visit: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traf-fops/developserv/permits/>
- When is a Letter of Consent required?**
A letter of consent allows individuals to perform vegetation management along the highway for a short period of time. This could potentially be approved within just a few days. A letter can be requested from the West Region Maintenance Office at 805-389-1565.



Web sites for more information about the suggested plants:

- Creeping Wild Rye (*Leymus triticoides*):**
http://www.goldrushnursery.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/plants.plantDetail/plant_id/340/index.htm
- Rocky Point (*Sisyrinchium bellum*):**
<http://nativeson.typepad.com/plants/2010/05/sisyrinchium-bellum-rocky-point.html>
- Golden Eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium californicum*):**
http://www.anniesannuals.com/plt_lst/lists/general/lst.gen.asp?prodid=984
- Yarrows (*Achillea millefolium californica*):**
<http://www.homegroundhabitatnursery.org/plants/achillea-millefolium>
- Sticky Monkey Flower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*):**
<http://www.laspilitas.com/nature-of-california/plants/diplacus-aurantiacus>
- Creeping Barberry (*Mahonia repens*):**
<http://www.laspilitas.com/garden/february-native-garden-flowers-pictures.htm>
- California Fuchsia (*Zauschneria californica Mexicana*):**
http://www.laspilitas.com/garden/Drought_resistant_plants_for_a_santa_barbara_garden.html



Fire Safe Planting Guidelines



About the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Partners

Since 2012, the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Roadside Committee has been working to identify solutions for vegetation management and clearance along Topanga Canyon Boulevard (SR-27) without the use of herbicides. Now, as a collaborative partnership, the committee has formed the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Partners to promote public safety and wildfire prevention while taking into consideration management of roadside vegetation to protect the natural environment.



How Can You Help?

We're asking for your help! As a property owner or resident along SR-27, the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Partners are requesting you join our effort to manage roadside vegetation without the use of herbicides, to be fire safe and maintain the beauty of our canyon. We have included our recommended herbicide-free best management practices (BMPs) to clear the roadside. Some of these BMPs include mulching, native gardening, and hand or mechanized vegetation clearance.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Topanga Canyon Boulevard Roadside Committee, an ad hoc advisory group, working collaboratively with related public agencies and community organizations, is to plan and execute sustainable solutions by April 2013, and continuing annually, to manage brush clearance along TCB/State Route 27 that promote public safety and best management practices for fire safety, invasive plant management, and protection of the natural environment of the Topanga Creek Watershed, by using methods, other than herbicides, consistent with the goals and policies of the Topanga Creek Watershed Plan of 2002.

Best Management Practices

Vegetation Management and Clearance without Herbicides

The Partners have set these goals:

- 1. To be in full compliance with county and state fire ordinance requirements prior to fire season.
- 2. To maintain or improve watershed health.
- 3. Add to, or maintain, the scenic value of the canyon.

Complying with fire ordinances requires the removal of flammable vegetation within ten feet of the roadway, and any remaining, non-flammable vegetation should be less than 2” in height.

You can use one or more of these TCB Partners recommended BMPs to clear your roadside. Before beginning any work on the roadside take into consideration your access to water, soil consistency, slope of the property, and most importantly, your safety.



Hand Tools

For use in small areas.

Hand pulling weeds removes roots that prevents re-growth and reduces maintenance. Best completed when soil is soft during or after the rainy season.

After root removal, tamp soil to prevent reseeding and minimize erosion.

Hand cut weeds should be cut as close to the soil as possible and may require additional cutting following seasonal growth.

Dispose of all plant debris in a mulch pile or green waste bin.



Mechanized Tools

The Partners recommend battery-powered or electric weed whackers.

Weed clearance should be as close to the ground as possible and may require additional cutting following seasonal growth.

Be aware of potential fire hazards with sparks from mechanized tools and have a fire extinguisher handy.

Dispose of all plant debris in a mulch pile or green waste bin.

Mulching

Mulching is most effective immediately after using one of the clearance techniques above.

Cover area with 4”- 6” of composted, fire-resistant woodchips. Visit www.onetopanga.com for vendors.

Inhibits growth and requires little maintenance for several years.

Gardening with Native Plants

Gardening is best suited to locations with sufficient irrigation to establish the plants. After the first two years, little watering will be required for native, drought-tolerant plants.

Take advantage of the season and plant in November or December to receive Mother Nature’s irrigation.

Visit the OneTopanga website for vendors.

Work performed on the shoulder by private owners or contracted landscapers requires an encroachment permit.

Guidelines for Gardening with Native Plants

Plant in existing soil. Native plants grow better in native soil. Follow best management practices for vegetation clearance either by hand or with a mechanized tool.

Dig hole slightly larger than the root ball. Fill the hole with water, let drain, repeat. Gently loosen the root ball so the roots are no longer coiled. Do not tear the roots. Place the root ball in the hole.

Use the existing soil from the hole to secure the plant and fill the hole. Tamp the soil surrounding the plant to ensure root contact with the soil.

Water generously and follow directions from your nursery on watering to establish your plant. To increase water retention and prevent weed growth, follow best management practices for mulching using composted, fire-resistant woodchips.

Once a native plant is established, it is naturally conditioned to survive the hot, dry months.

Full Sun

Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*)
Blooms: Jan-June, dormant in summer
Slope: ALL



Soil: ALL
Dimensions: 1’/1’
Seeds or plugs
Mow 2x per year

Golden-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium californicum*)
Blooms: Late Spring
Slope: ALL
Soil: ALL
Dimensions: 8”/1’
Seeds or plugs
Mow 2x per year

Dwarf yarrow (*Achillea millefolium californica*)
Blooms: Spring, year round if watered
Slope: ALL
Soil: ALL
Dimensions: 3’/3’
Seeds or plugs
Mow every 6-8 wks



California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*)
Blooms: March-May
Slope: ALL
Soil: ALL
Dimensions: 8”/1’
Seeds
Mow once a year – after bloom

Partial Sun

Creeping wild rye (*Leymus triticoides*)
Blooms: Spring, year round if watered
Slope: ALL
Soil: ALL
Dimensions: 8”/3’ 4”
Seeds or plugs
Mow 2x per year

Sticky monkey flower (*Diplacus aurantiacus*)
Blooms: Rainy season



Slope: ALL
Soil: ALL
Dimensions: 3’/3’
Seeds or plugs
Mow once a year – early summer

California strawberry (*Fragaria californica*)
Blooms & Fruit: May-August



Slope: Gentle
Soil: Heavy, sandy
Dimensions: 4”/flat
Plugs
Mow 2x per year

Creeping barberry (*Mahonia repens*)
Blooms: Spring-Summer
Riparian



Slope: Creek banks
Dimensions: 1’/3’
Plugs, spreads by rhizomes
Mow 2x per year

California fuchsia (*Zauschneria californica Mexicana*)
Blooms: Late summer
Slope: ALL
Soil: Under oaks
Dimensions: 1’/1’
Plugs
Mow once a year